



Promoting the wise use of all natural resources

P.O. Box 837
351 7th Street
Meeker, CO 81641
(970) 878-9838

March 22, 2023

The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1332 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Chairman Westerman & Ranking Member Grijalva:

The White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts (Districts) are political subdivisions of the State of Colorado. The Districts cover Rio Blanco County which is in northwestern Colorado. The Districts' authorities, power, and structure are contained in the Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 35, Article 70. The Districts promote the wise use of natural resources and address rangeland health, wildlife, forest health, water, and soil erosion through information, education, and technical assistance. The Districts work and partner with local, State, and federal/national entities to implement on-the-ground conservation utilizing local expertise and knowledge.

Thank you for taking the time to hold a hearing on H.R. 764, the Trust the Science Act. Science is critically important issue in addressing natural resource and wildlife protections and management. Without it, the management of our important natural resources and wildlife fall prey to the whims of lawsuits, administrative technicalities, and politics.

2023 is the 50th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). It is unfortunate that we are not celebrating the successes of the Act instead of using it as weapon/tool in politics. The ESA has good intentions and has had many successes. Unfortunately, special interest groups use it as a fundraising tool in multiple ways. They play on uninformed people's emotions and get them to send money so they can file frivolous lawsuits and then double/triple that money through the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) when they get the government to settle out of court or win on a minor technicality. This process costs the United States taxpayers millions of dollars each year and has paralyzed our federal government agencies efforts to implement real science and management that the scientists are hired to do.

The Districts strongly support Representative Boebert's H.R. 764, "Trust the Science Act". This Act will allow the ESA to show success and return management of threatened species back the state wildlife agencies where it belongs for successful management.

Respectfully,

Marc Etchart, President
White River Conservation District

Bill Hume, President
Douglas Creek Conservation District

Purpose: *To make available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.*